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A national survey was conducted as part of a project on Developing and Utilizing New Techniques for Recruiting and Training Volunteers in the 70's. A presented questionnaire was mailed to 4132 professional directors in the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and 1219 were returned. Of the respondents, 52% had been professional directors for 10 or more years; 17%, for less than three. They worked mainly in rural areas or small cities (26%) or in inner cities (26%). Volunteer leaders in the YMCA were 69% male and 31% female; as a group they were relatively well educated, with 65% having attended college. On the average, 63% had served for less than one year, with inner city communities having the highest proportion of those who had served over three years and rural communities or small cities having the lowest proportion. Data indicated a positive correlation between training time and length of tenure. On the variables sex, education, occupation, tenure, and training time, there were important, but not statistically significant, variations between types of communities. (nl)

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VOLUNTEER GROUP LEADERS IN THE YMCA

A Working Paper for the Project on
*"Developing and Utilizing New Techniques
for Recruiting and Training Volunteers
in the 70's"*. Based on a national
survey concerning volunteer group leaders
in the YMCA.

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May, 1969

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VOLUNTEER GROUP LEADERS IN THE YMCA

INTRODUCTION

This paper contains the results of a national survey which was conducted as a part of the Research and Development Division's project on Developing and Utilizing New Techniques for Recruiting and Training Volunteers in the 70's. The purpose of this paper is to provide helpful information to those who will be participating in the Project's two developmental consultations; one dealing with the development of recruiting models and the other dealing with the development of training models for volunteer group leaders. The paper provides descriptive data about volunteer group leaders in the YMCA and an analysis of the perceptions of YMCA practitioners concerning the recruiting and training of volunteer group leaders.

THE SURVEY PROCEDURE

Questionnaire - The survey instrument (see appendix) was mailed to 4132 professional directors in the YMCA. Prior to mailing, the instrument was pre-tested in four Associations and re-designed based on the results of the pre-test. The mailing resulted in 1219 useable questionnaires being returned in time for tabulation, or a useable return rate of 30 per cent.

The Respondents - The majority of the respondents, 52 per cent, had been professional YMCA directors for 10 or more years. However, the less experienced directors, were well represented in the respondent group since 17 per cent of the respondents had been professional YMCA directors for less than 3 years. Of the total number of respondents, 64 per cent had responsibility for recruiting and training 32,150 volunteer group leaders during the past year. The remaining 36 per cent had previously had responsibility for volunteers but not during the past year.

The respondents worked in a variety of types of communities with the largest proportions, 26 per cent each, serving in rural or small cities and inner city communities. The distribution of all respondents by type of community is indicated in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Location of Respondent's YMCAs By Type of Community
N = 1219

Type of Community	Number of Respondents	Percent
Rural or Small City	315	26
Suburban	217	18
Urban-Outer City	123	10
Urban-Inner City	321	26
Other	243	20
TOTAL	1219	100%

Education - Table 3 presents some interesting and important comparisons of the educational level of volunteer group leaders among the various types of communities. It should be noted that 65 per cent of all group leaders have had some college training, and in all types of communities the majority of leaders have attended college. Although suburban communities have the largest proportion of college graduates serving as volunteer leaders, these communities also have a relatively high proportion of volunteers who have not completed high school.

TABLE 3
Education of Volunteer Group Leaders
Respondent N = 755

Education	Rural or Small City		Suburban		Urban Outer City		Urban Inner City		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not Completing H.S.	1,061	13	995	16	541	17	642	11	856	14	4,095	14
Completing H.S., No College	2,038	25	951	15	671	21	1,266	22	1,298	21	6,224	21
Some College, Not Graduated	2,216	27	1,615	25	1,073	34	1,384	24	1,853	29	8,141	27
College Graduate	2,786	35	2,841	44	863	28	2,435	43	2,307	36	11,232	38
TOTAL	8,101	100	6,402	100	3,148	100	5,727	100	6,314	100	29,692	100
$\chi^2 = 6.48$ $P > 5\%$												

Occupations - Students compose a larger proportion of YMCA volunteer group leaders in all types of communities than any other occupational category. On the average those persons classified as "professional" represent the second largest proportion of volunteers. Several important variations are indicated in Table 4 which should be noted. For instance, suburban communities rely more on volunteers who are in professional and semi-professional occupations and rely relatively less on volunteers in the blue collar occupations. YMCAs in rural communities or small cities utilize proportionately fewer students and rely more heavily on volunteers in both blue collar and white collar occupations.

Time Spent In Training - Approximately one-half of the volunteer group leaders in the YMCA received less than 10 hours of training during the past year. As indicated by Table 6, volunteers serving in inner city communities spent proportionately more time in training than did leaders in other types of communities, while leaders in rural communities or small cities spent proportionately less time in training activities. Although there is no statistically significant difference in training time by type of community, it is extremely important to note that training time is significantly related to tenure for volunteer group leaders. The application of Spearman's rank order technique produced a correlation coefficient of .82 which is significant at the .05 level. Consequently, there is a statistically significant relationship between training time and tenure - the more training time provided, the longer the tenure and vice versa.

TABLE 6

Training Time of Volunteer Group Leaders
N = 768

Training Time	Rural or Small City		Suburban		Urban Outer City		Urban Inner City		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 - 3 Hours	69	28	27	18	18	21	31	17	22	21	167	22
4 - 10 Hours	84	33	44	29	23	27	53	29	28	27	232	30
11 - 15 Hours	37	15	34	23	17	20	38	21	15	15	141	18
16 - 30 Hours	26	10	18	12	15	17	26	15	17	17	102	13
Over 30 Hours	34	14	26	18	13	15	32	18	21	20	126	17
TOTAL	250	100	149	100	86	100	180	100	103	100	768	100
$\chi^2 = 20.53$ $P > 5\%$												

RECRUITING VOLUNTEER GROUP LEADERS IN THE YMCA

Desirable Characteristics - Respondents were asked, "In recruiting volunteer group leaders, what are the most important characteristics that you look for?" Their response categories, in rank order and with frequencies, are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7
Desirable Characteristics of Volunteer Group Leaders

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
1.	High motivation, desire to help, willingness to give time	563
2.	Interest, experience, skills in area of responsibility	481
3.	Sensitivity, understanding, interest in people and their needs	383
4.	High personal standards, reputable character, Christian ideals	318
5.	Outgoing personality, enthusiasm, charisma	305
6.	Suitability for, interest in working with age group	228
7.	Reliability, responsibility	213
8.	Ability to influence, to lead - present or potential	177
9.	Acquaintanceship with "Y", understanding of YMCA goals	159
10.	Maturity	116

Major Problems in Recruiting - Respondents were asked, "What do you see as the three most important problems, blocks or obstacles in recruiting volunteer group leaders?" The responses, along with rank order and frequencies, are listed in Table 8.

TABLE 8
Problems, Blocks and Obstacles in Recruiting Volunteer Group Leaders

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
1.	Recruiting and training not well planned, organized, executed	999
2.	Competition for time of prospective leaders	659
3.	Desire for remuneration	353
4.	Poor interpretation of program to prospects. Objectives, commitment not made clear	320
5.	Availability of person with needed skills	196
6.	Maintaining interest, motivation	127
7.	Inability to discern leadership potential or its lack	96
8.	Lack of commitment and belief in value of the task	77
9.	Reluctance to delegate responsibility, or delegating too much	64
10.	Convincing people of their capability	56

TRAINING VOLUNTEER GROUP LEADERS IN THE YMCA

Major Problems in Training - The responses to the question, "What do you see as the three most important problems, blocks, or obstacles in training volunteer group leaders?", are listed in Table 9. Although not all of the response categories are listed in the table, it should be noted that there was more clustering of responses on this question, and hence fewer categories, than was evidenced in the responses to the other open-ended questions.

TABLE 9
Problems, Blocks, and Obstacles in Training
Volunteer Group Leaders

Rank	Response Category	Frequency
1.	Availability of adequate time	619
2.	Failure to see training of volunteers as priority need	498
3.	Lack of careful planning and preparation for training program	402
4.	Securing qualified trainers	312
5.	Failure to understand needs of leaders	261
6.	Lack of recognition of the need for training by volunteers	170
7.	Developing adequate training methods and materials	156
8.	Lack of motivation on the part of prospective leaders	123
9.	Lack of interest in and understanding about the "Y"	114
10.	Failure to supervise and follow-up on initial training	69

Training Needs - It should be made abundantly clear that the training needs of volunteer group leaders listed in Table 10 are perceptions of YMCA professional practitioners as differentiated from the perceptions of volunteer group leaders themselves. These perceptions, however, can be very valuable if used as one piece of data in the identification of needed competencies of volunteers on which appropriate training activities can be based. The responses categorized in Table 10 were generated by the question, "What do you see as the most important training needs of volunteer group leaders?"

TABLE 10
Training Needs of Volunteer Group Leaders

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Response Category</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
1.	Understanding purpose, objectives, goals of YMCA and its program	364
2.	Understanding of group behavior, inter-personal relationships	360
3.	Skills in working with people, skills in communication	225
4.	Understanding, sensitivity about basic problems, conditions and needs of people	181
5.	Skills in planning, developing resources, setting goals	173
6.	Clarity in understanding responsibilities	161
7.	Physical and technical skills	136
8.	To develop self confidence and motivation	107
9.	To feel that their contribution is valuable, appreciated, recognized	91
10.	Willingness to accept correction, supervision	77

IN SUMMARY

The data obtained through the national survey came from a large number of YMCA practitioners who have a broad range of experience and who are serving in all types of communities. Consequently the data are deemed to be representative of the total YMCA universe.

The descriptive data indicate that 69 per cent of volunteer leaders in the YMCA are male and 31 per cent female. As a group, YMCA volunteers are relatively well educated, with 65 per cent having attended college. Indeed, approximately one-half of all volunteer group leaders are in either "student" or "professional" occupational categories. On the average, 63 per cent of volunteer leaders in the YMCA serve for less than one year. Inner city communities have the highest proportion of volunteers who serve for over three years, while rural communities or small cities have the smallest proportion rendering extended service. Although one-half of all volunteer group leaders in the YMCA received less than 10 hours of training during the past year, the data indicate a positive correlation between training time and tenure.

On the variables examined (namely, sex, education, occupation, tenure and training time) there are important variations between types of communities, but the differences are not statistically significant and could have occurred by chance. These data have important implications for the development of training models and designs for volunteer group leaders in different types of communities. To the degree that the variables examined are important in the development of training activities there appears to be little need for differentiation in training methods by types of communities.

YMCA practitioners identified both the desirable characteristics of volunteer group leaders and the problems involved in recruiting volunteers. The desirable characteristics have important implications for the processes of identifying volunteers for group leadership. The listing of problems can provide the beginning criteria for testing the feasibility and potential effectiveness of recruiting models.

The survey also identified the major training needs of volunteer group leaders in the YMCA, as perceived by professional practitioners. These data can be used, along with other information, in establishing the "core competencies" needed by volunteer group leaders. In turn, these "core competencies" can be used as a basis for developing training designs and activities which will fulfill the self-diagnosed needs of volunteer group leaders.

Finally, the respondents identified the major problems, blocks, and obstacles in training volunteer group leaders. These data can be used in both designing and testing training formulations based on the "core competencies", to insure the feasibility and practicality of these formulations.

JMH/gs
May 6, 1969

CODE _____

QUESTIONNAIRERECRUITING AND TRAINING VOLUNTEER GROUP LEADERS IN THE YMCA

For purposes of this questionnaire the term "Volunteer Group Leader" is defined as "a person who works voluntarily with a continuing program group in the YMCA and who is not a member of the group but who has been placed with the group by the YMCA as an 'enabler' or group worker, to assist the group in using the resources and creative abilities in self-determined purposeful program that is directed toward constructive ends."

YOUR NAME _____ ASSOCIATION OR BRANCH _____

ADDRESS _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the items on this questionnaire by marking X in the appropriate boxes or numbers on the _____ provided. Ignore the numbers appearing in parenthesis () next to each item. These numbers are for tabulating purposes only.

CONCERNING YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATION

1. How long have you been a YMCA Director?

- (3-1) ☐ less than 3 years
(-2) ☐ 3- 5 years
(-3) ☐ 6- 9 years
(-4) ☐ 10-15 years
(-5) ☐ 16 years and over

2. How would you describe the community in which your YMCA is located?

- (4-1) ☐ Rural or small city (under 50,000)
(-2) ☐ Suburban
(-3) ☐ Urban (outer city)
(-4) ☐ Urban (inner city)
(-5) ☐ Other (specify) _____

3. During 1968 did you have responsibility for recruiting and training volunteer group leaders as defined above?

- (5-1) ☐ Yes
(-2) ☐ No

VERY IMPORTANT: If you answered "yes" to the question above, complete all of the items in Sections I and II on the following pages.
If you answered "no", skip Section I, but complete all items in Section II.

Section I

Descriptive Information Concerning Volunteer Group Leaders

Note: If you do not have the detailed information requested below, please give us your best estimates.

4. How many different volunteer group leaders did you have during the calendar year 1968?

_____ Volunteer Group Leaders.

5. Of this number, how many were:

(6/7/8) _____ Male
(9/10/11) _____ Female

6. How were these volunteers distributed educationally?

(12/13/14) _____ Number not completing high school
(15/16/17) _____ Number completing high school, no college
(18/19/20) _____ Number having some college, but not graduated
(21/22/23) _____ Number of college graduates
_____ TOTAL

7. How were these volunteers distributed according to occupation?

(24/25/26) _____ Number unemployed
(27/28/29) _____ Number that were students
(30/31/32) _____ Number in blue collar occupations (i.e. skilled and semi-skilled workers)
(33/34/35) _____ Number in white collar occupations (i.e. secretary, bookkeeper)
(36/37/38) _____ Number in semi-professional occupation (i.e. lab technicians, manager)
(39/40/41) _____ Number in professional occupations (i.e. doctor, lawyer)
_____ TOTAL

8. How were these volunteers distributed by tenure? (How long did they serve in the group leaders position to which they were assigned?)

(42/43/44) _____ Number serving less than 6 months
(45/46/47) _____ Number serving from 7 - 12 months
(48/49/50) _____ Number serving from 13 - 24 months
(51/52/53) _____ Number serving from 25 - 36 months
(54/55/56) _____ Number serving over 36 months
_____ TOTAL

9. How much training time did you provide for volunteer group leaders during the past year? (Mark one)

(57-1) ☐ 1 - 3 hours
(-2) ☐ 4 - 10 hours
(-3) ☐ 11 - 15 hours
(-4) ☐ 16 - 30 hours
(-5) ☐ Over 30 hours

10. Were the answers given above (Mark one):

(58-1) ☐ Estimates or "best guesses"
(-2) ☐ Based on accurate personal information
(-3) ☐ Based on detailed records

Section II

Your Judgement and Opinion Concerning Volunteer Group Leaders

11. What do you see as the three most important problems, blocks or obstacles in recruiting volunteer group leaders?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

(59-1/62-Y)

12. What do you see as the three most important problems, blocks or obstacles in training volunteer group leaders?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

(63-1/66-Y)

13. What do you see as the most important training needs of volunteer group leaders? (Please be as specific as possible)

(67-1/70-Y)

14. In recruiting volunteer group leaders, what are the most important characteristics that you look for?

(71-1/74-Y)

MANY THANKS!

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